

## Message Text

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46

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT PINS BR CI

SUBJECT: INVOLVEMENT EDUARDO FREI IN ASSASSINATION GENERAL  
RENE SCHNEIDER

1. SUMMARY. MAJOR BRAZILIAN JOURNAL HAS PUBLISHED  
ACCOUNT BY SELF-STYLED CHILEAN RIGHT-WING TERRORIST JUAN  
DIEGO DAVILA OF ASSASSINATION CHILENA GENERAL RENE SCHNEIDER  
ON OCTOBER 22, 1970. STORY IMPLICATES FORMER CHILEAN PRESIDENT  
EDUARDO FREI AND A HOST OF SENIOR RETIRED MILITARY OFFICERS  
IN ASSASSINATION PLOT, EITHER THROUGH GIVING ACTIVE ASSISTANCE  
OR TACIT APPROVAL TO PLOT. END SUMMARY.

2. NATIONAL CIRCULATION "JORNAL DO BRASIL", IN EDITION  
SEPTEMBER 30, GIVES PROMINENT PLAY TO ACCOUNT OF ASSASSINATION  
OF CHILEAN ARMY CHIEF GENERAL RENE SCHNEIDER AS RELATED BY MAJOR  
JUAN DIEGO DAVILA, CONFIDANT OF EX-GENERAL ROBERTO VIAUX  
AND SELF-STYLED RIGHT-WING TERRORIST. LEAD-IN ARTICLE ON  
PAGE ONE UNDER TITLE "CONFESSIONS OF A TERRORIST", DESCRIBES  
DAVILA'S ACCOUNT AS "POINTING OUT EX-PRESIDENT EDUARDO FREI  
AND HIGH MILITARY CHIEFS AS PARTICIPANTS IN THE SCHNEIDER  
PLOT." ACCOUNT ITSELF, UNDER TITLE "THE FIRST DEATH OF THE  
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DEMOCRACY" OCCUPIES FULL INSIDE PAGE OF JOURNAL.

3. ACCORDING TO DAVILA'S ACCOUNT, PLOT BEGAN WITH GENERAL VIAUX MARAMBIO, AND HIS UNSUCCESSFUL REVOLT IN 1969. VIAUX, PREOCCUPIED WITH GROWING STRENGTH OF POPULAR UNITY PARTY, AGREED TO END MUTINY IN RETURN FOR OFFER FROM PRESIDENT FREI TO APPOINT GENERAL SCHNEIDER AS CHIEF OF ARMY AND TO ALLOW VIAUX TO RETIRE. HOWEVER, VIAUX REMAINED VERY ACTIVE POLITICALLY WITHIN ARMY AND CARRIED OUT PRIVATE CAMPAIGN AGAINST POPULAR UNITY PARTY INFLUENCE. WHEN VIAUX'S ADHERENTS FAILED CONVINCE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS TO ACT AGAINST ALLENDE'S ELECTION IN CONGRESS, THEY DECIDED UNDERTAKE CAMPAIGN OF POLITICAL TERRORISM. INTENTION WAS TO PROVOKE LEFTISTS INTO ARMED COMBAT IN STREETS. HOWEVER, ARTICLE QUOTES DAVILA, LEFTISTS WERE WELL-DISCIPLINED AND REFUSED TO REACT. VIAUX GROUP THEN TURNED TO SCHNEIDER IN ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE HIM REFUSE TO SEAT NEW GOVERNMENT. WHEN THIS FAILED, DAVILA ATTEMPTED CONVINCE FREI AND GENERAL SCHNEIDER ON MISSION TO WASHINGTON, BUT FREI REFUSED "BECAUSE HE WAS AFRAID OF BEING CAUGHT ALONE BETWEEN THOSE WHO WANTED A COUP AND THE VICTORIOUS MARCH OF ALLENDE."

4. VIAUX GROUP, IN DESPERATION, DECIDED TO DISRUPT ELECTIONS BY KIDNAPPING SCHNEIDER. ACCORDING DAVILA, PARTICIPANTS IN PLOT INCLUDED NAVY CHIEF TIRADO BARROS, AIR FORCE DEPUTY-CHIEF GARCIA, CHIEF OF SANTIAGO MILITARY DISTRICT VALENZUELA GODOY, AND CHIEF OF CARABINEROS HUERTA CELIS. PRESIDENT FREI DISCOVERED PLOT AND ASKED CONSPIRATORS TO KEEP HIM INFORMED BY NOT INVOLVE HIM: "AT ALL COSTS, I WILL PRESERVE MY IMAGE AS A DEMOCRAT." INTENT OF PLOT ACCORDING DAVILA, WAS USE KIDNAPPING AS PRETEXT FOR DISMANTLING ALLENDE APPARATUS. IN COURSE OF SEARCHING FOR KIDNAPPED ARMY CHIEF, MILITARY FORCES WOULD UNDERTAKE SYSTEMATIC DESTRUCTION OF MIR UNITS, ESPECIALLY THE ROMANA PARRA BRIGADE. PLOTTERS HAD NO INTENTION KILL SCHNEIDER.

5. PLOT TOOK SHAPE AT MEETING OF CONSPIRATORS CHAIRED BY VIAUX OCTOBER 17, 1970. AT LAST MOMENT, OVER OBJECTIONS VIAUX, DECISION TAKEN ALSO KIDNAP GENERAL PRATS. ATTEMPT WAS ABORTED WITHOUT ALERTING EITHER VICTIM. AT THIS POINT, VIAUX AND DAVILA DECIDED KIDNAP SCHNEIDER USING DAVILA'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OWN MEN. SCHNEIDER DEFENDED HIMSELF AND WAS KILLED. ARTICLE CONCLUDES THAT DEATH OF SCHNEIDER "DID NOT STOP ELECTION OF ALLENDE BUT DID OPEN WAY FOR MILITARY PARTICIPATION IN THE EVENTS THAT FOLLOWED."

6. ACCORDING TO ARTICLE, DAVILA LEFT BRAZIL DURING LAST WEEK OF SEPTEMBER FOR MIAMI. HE WILL LIVE WITH HIS DAUGHTER, A RESIDENT OF NEW YORK CITY, "WHERE HE WILL

AWAIT THE CALL OF THE MILITARY JUNTA." COPY OF ARTICLE BEING  
POUCHED ARA/BR. DECON UPON RECEIPT.  
CRIMMINS

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## Message Attributes

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